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**Minute for Mission**

**“For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace.” Isaiah 55:12**

The prophet Isaiah invites us to imagine God’s peace in unlikely places. Trees clap their hands. Joy grows where sorrow once reigned. A world torn by enmity, strife and despair blossoms back to abundant life. Lions lie down with lambs, and nations once at war with each other come together in peace.

Whenever the church gathers for worship, we are assured of Christ’s peace. We celebrate that we are connected, we are loved and we are not alone. We worship together and are fed from Scripture and at Christ’s table of peace.

After the feast God has prepared for us, we are sent out carrying the joy rekindled in worship and challenged to take the peace of Christ into our world. No matter how large or small the world we inhabit, the joy of God’s presence empowers us to live joyfully within our communities and to bring peace to all around us.

Peace empowered by joy is at a premium in our world. It is difficult to find and even more challenging to maintain. In our polarized world torn by war, famine, and marginalization of the poor and disenfranchised, we are in desperate need of joyful and brave people willing to ask the hard questions and live the difficult solutions that make peace possible. One person, one situation, one step at a time.

As we go out into the world in joy and are led forth in peace, we are called to take decisive and bold action. We take action today by offering a blessing of our own. Through our participation in the Peace & Global Witness Offering, our church is extending Christ’s peace throughout our community — 25% of the gifts received will stay right here at the church to build God’s house alongside (NAME THE ORGANIZATION OR GROUP ASSISTED IN YOUR MINISTRY). Twenty-five percent will support regional efforts in our presbytery, and 50% will go the Presbyterian Mission Agency for its ministries of education and partnership with active peacemakers all around the world.

On World Communion Sunday, we celebrate that Christ’s peace extends throughout all Creation. We celebrate that we are all together at the table, in God’s house. We celebrate that we are offered what we need to continue the work of building the household of God with active peacemakers here at home and around the world.

God’s peace, empowered by God’s joy, reminds us that we are connected to each other. We are not alone. You are not alone. Peace begins with each of us. Thanks be to God.

***Let us pray~***

*O God, you are our peace. As you have gathered us to feast at your table, lead us into this world you love so much with the joy that only you can give*. **Amen**.